

## Heart and Stroke Education Session

During class, we will spend some time discussing 2 key clinical targets that affect your risk for heart disease and stroke – Cholesterol and Blood Pressure

### My Targets:

Cholesterol	Blood Pressure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Too much cholesterol can increase the chance of plaque build up in our arteries which can lead to heart attack or stroke</li><li>• Target values depend on your risk profile however once you have had a heart event or stroke, the targets become much lower.</li> <li>• I am (circle one):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High risk</li><li>• Low risk</li><li>• Unsure</li></ul></li> <li>• My current cholesterol numbers are:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LDL_____</li><li>• HDL_____</li><li>• Triglycerides_____</li><li>• Non-HDL_____</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chronic high blood pressure can cause damage to the inside lining of the artery walls</li><li>• This increases the chance of plaque build-up which can lead to heart attack or stroke</li><li>• Over time, high blood pressure can also weaken the heart muscle</li> <li>• My target:</li>  <li>• My current BP readings:</li></ul>

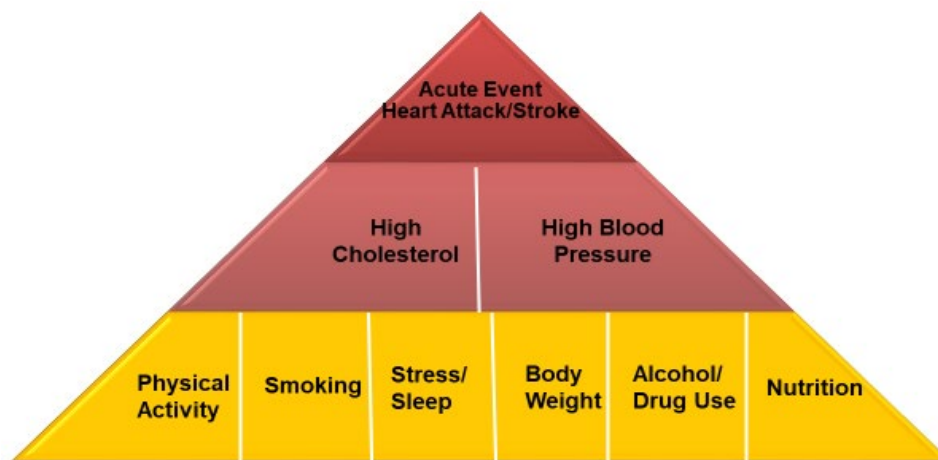
\*Blood glucose/HbA1C are also important clinical targets for those that have Diabetes or Pre-Diabetes.

## My Risk Assessment:

There are several risk factors we CAN'T change that contribute to Heart Disease and Stroke. While we cannot change these, it can be helpful to assess our overall risk. Circle any that you think apply to you:

- **Age** (risk increases in men over 45 and women after menopause)
- **Sex** (men are at a greater risk than women and then equal after menopause)
- **Heredity** (if heart disease or stroke run in your family, your risk is greater, especially if mom, dad, or siblings had a heart event/stroke under age 55)
- **Ethnicity** (African, Asian, South Asian and Indigenous people are at greater risk)

The good news is that there are many actions we can take to keep our blood pressure and cholesterol values in check to reduce our overall risk for heart disease and stroke.



We encourage you to think about which of these risk factors might apply to you. Take some time to reflect on the risk factors you CAN change and answer the next few questions on the next page. For each question, circle the answer that is the most accurate for you at this moment

### Physical Activity

Physical activity helps reduce our risk of cardiovascular disease. Physical activity includes cardio, resistance (strength) exercises and stretching.

- How many days per week do you participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity?  
0-2 days      3-4 days      5-6 days      7 days
- How many minutes per day (on average) do you spend doing moderate intensity physical activity?  
0-10 min      10-20 min      30 min or more
- Is this a risk factor for me?      Yes      No      Unsure

### Nutrition

Healthy eating includes lots of fruit and vegetables, lean protein and whole grains and limits processed foods, foods high in sodium and foods high in saturated fats.

- Is this a risk factor for me? (circle one)      Yes      No      Unsure

### Strong Emotions/Mental Health

Depression, stress, anxiety and anger can raise your blood pressure and increase your risk for heart disease or another cardiac event.

- How would you rate your current overall stress level?  
Low stress      Moderate Stress      High stress
- Is this a risk factor for me?      Yes      No      Unsure

### Tobacco Use/Smoking

Use of tobacco (and second hand smoke) causes damage to the lining of the arteries both in the heart and the rest of the body.

- Have you used tobacco in the last 30 days?
- Is this a risk factor for me?      Yes      No      Unsure

### Alcohol

Canada's low risk drinking guidelines recommend no more than 2 drinks per day for women (no more than 10 per week) and no more than 3 drinks per day for men (no more than 15 per week). It is also recommended to plan non-drinking days within each week.

- How many days per week do you drink alcohol?  
0 days      1-3 days      4-6 days      7 days
- How many drinks do you consume on a typical day when you do drink alcohol?  
1-2      3-4      5-6      More than 6
- Is this a risk factor for me? (circle one)      Yes      No      Unsure

Is there one of these risk factors that you are ready to work on?

## GOAL SETTING

**Overall goal:** what do you want to achieve?

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**Brainstorm:** all the actions you *could* take to achieve your goal

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**Choose:** **ONE** action from the list above that you are ready to work on

It should be:

Something **YOU** want to do or think you should do

Achievable (or doable) this week

Action-specific – being more active is too broad/vague but walking 10 minutes after lunch 3 days this week, Monday, Wednesday & Friday is very specific

**Action Plan:** come up with a concrete plan to help you reach your goal

Answer the questions:

What? (specific action)\_\_\_\_\_

How much? (time, distance or amount)\_\_\_\_\_

When? (time of day, days of the week)\_\_\_\_\_

How Often? (three times this week. Avoid saying every day)\_\_\_\_\_

How Confident are you? (7/10 or more that you can achieve the entire action plan)

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

Not  
confident  
at all



absolutely  
sure it will get done

At the end of the week, review your action plan. Is it moving you towards your health goals? Remember you can always change your plans if they aren't working for you.